

# OAS Data Spotlight

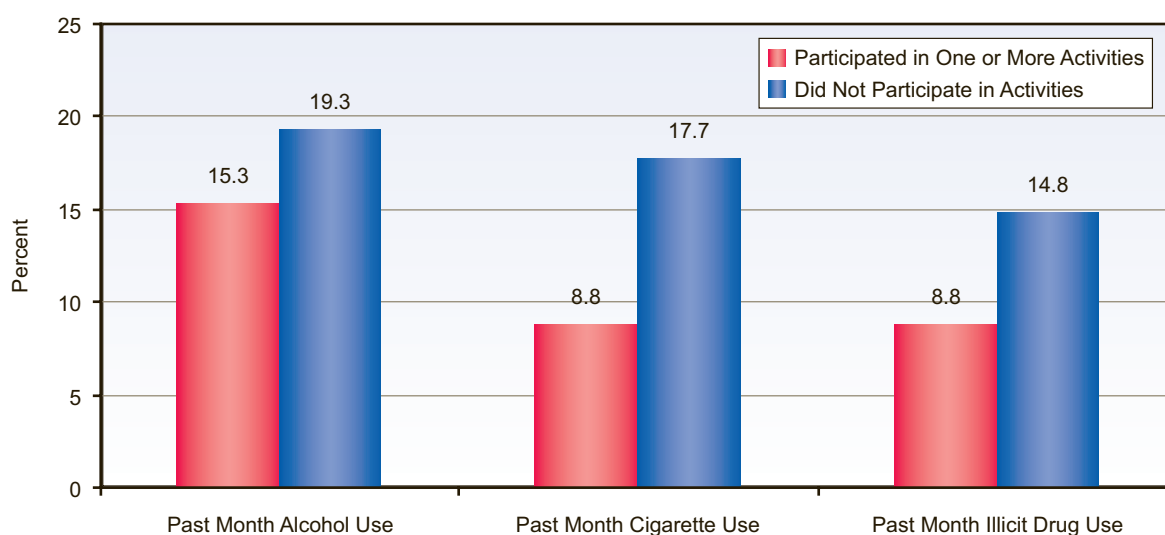
National Survey on Drug Use and Health

August 2010

## Adolescents Who Participate in Extracurricular Activities Less Likely to Use Alcohol, Cigarettes, and Illicit Drugs

Extracurricular activities, such as sports, band, clubs, and dance lessons, are an important part of growing up for millions of American teens. These activities promote physical fitness, intellectual growth, and social interaction, and have been associated with higher self-esteem, better academic performance, and improved interpersonal skills.<sup>1</sup> The latest findings from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) indicate that 22.4 million adolescents aged 12 to 17 (89.3 percent) participate in extracurricular activities and that those who participate in these activities are less likely to have used alcohol, cigarettes, and illicit drugs in the past month. In particular, adolescents who participated in these activities were half as likely as nonparticipants to have smoked cigarettes.

**Past Month Substance Use among Adolescents Aged 12 to 17, by Past Year Participation in Extracurricular Activities\*: 2006 to 2008**



\* Includes school-based, community-based, and other activities. School-based activities include team sports, cheerleading, choir, band, student government, or clubs. Community-based activities include volunteer activities, sports, clubs, or groups. "Other" activities include dance, piano, karate, or horseback-riding lessons.

<sup>1</sup> Mahoney, J. L., Larson, R. W., & Eccles, J. S. (Eds.). (2005). *Organized activities as contexts of development: Extracurricular activities, after-school programs, and community programs*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Source: The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) is an annual survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The survey collects data by administering questionnaires to a representative sample of the population through face-to-face interviews at their places of residence.

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